

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 9, 1869.

Subject: Consolations of the Suffering of Christ.

PLYMOUTH PULPIT:

A Weekly Publication

OF

SERMONS

PREACHED BY

HENRY WARD BEECHER.



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J. B. FORD & CO., No. 39 PARK ROW.

1869

Brooklyn, January, 1869.

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CONSOLATIONS

OF THE

SUFFERING OF CHRIST.

"For the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ."—2 COR. I. 5.

"For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted."—HEB. II. 18.

This is one of the wells of consolation. The well on which Jesus sat at Sychar, and which the patriarch opened, remains there still. For thousands of years, without an hour's stinginess, it has given out freely of its water. The lips are countless that have sought it. The old, old Hebrews; the men of the ten tribes, before their dispersion; the Syrians, in their incursions; the Samaritans, in their time; the Crusaders; the wandering tribes of Bedouins; the Turks; the French; the pilgrims of every nation under Heaven—all these have been there, and taken refreshment from this well which the old patriarch opened. From its brink have gone up thanks from little children, and their over wearied mothers, from sweaty laborers, and sun-burnt travelers. How long and how large is the bounty of a single well like this in a thirsty land! Indeed, it rose upon the Psalmist as one of the traits of a very saint, that he opened a well. "Blessed is the man" "who, passing through the valley of Baca, maketh it a well." Isaiah spiritualizes the thought (and that brings us back to our text): "With joy shall ye draw waters out of other wells of salvation." These passages are *wells of salvation*.

Out of these wells a thousand times as many, perhaps, have drawn refreshment, as ever drew literal water from the well at Sychar. They are the wells in "the valley of Baca." They are full of that very water of which Jesus, sitting on the side of the well at Sychar, spoke to

the woman of Samaria, saying that the water which he should give her should spring up ever-living, needing not to be drawn for the wants of every transient hour.

The first thought that withstands our appropriation of this declaration, both as it respects the consolation which we derive from the suffering of Christ, and the fact that in his temptation we are to find outlet for our own, is this question: *Can a Divine Being suffer?* I should rather put the question, Can one be a Divine Being in such a world, and over such a world as this, and *not* suffer? If we carve in our imagination a perfect God, with the idea that perfectness must be that which is relative to himself alone—that he must be perfect to himself in intelligence; perfect to himself in moral character; perfect to himself in beauty, and in transcendent elevation above all those vicissitudes and troubles which arise from imperfection—if thus we make our God, and in no way give him roots in humanity; in no way lead him to have sympathy with infirmity, then we have not a perfect God. We have a carved selfishness embellished. We have a being that cannot be Father to any thought that springs from the heart.

Is God a stone carved to beauty? Is he a dreamy optimist, who, seeing some far away end, cares nothing for all the steps—all the toils and troubles—which lead toward it? Is not God a God of sympathy, grieved with our griefs, pained at our sufferings, carrying our sins, and so carrying them that by his stripes we are healed?

A God that cannot suffer, and suffer in his Godship nature, can scarcely be presented to the human soul, in all its weaknesses and trials and wants, so that it shall be acceptable. We need a suffering God. It was the very ministration of Christ to develop that side of the Divine Being—the susceptibility of God to suffer through sympathy, as the instrument and channel of benevolence by which to rescue those that suffer through sin.

But, *could he be tempted of evil? and could he suffer in that relation?* Consider the history of Jesus, and let that be the answer. Recall to your mind through what portal he entered upon his public life—the grand temptation of the wilderness, where for forty days and forty nights he underwent inconceivable temptation. Consider the three years of life in society where he submitted himself to every one of those girds and attritions and thrusts which belong to every human experience, and where, surely, he was as susceptible of suffering temptation as we, and more, because the magnitude and bulk of his being was greater—for, as I shall show in a moment, the power of suffering is in the ratio of the magnitude of the being who suffers, and not in the occasion that offers. Consider that, as he entered his ministry through the portals of temptation, so he departed from it in the same

way. The mystery of Gethsemane is even more sublime and less penetrable than the mystery of the wilderness. Hence "in all points," it may be said, he was "tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

But how shall one think that Christ was "tempted *in all points* like as we are." He never sinned, and therefore he never suffered remorse. We suffer remorse; and could Christ be said to be "tempted in *all points* like as we are" if he never knew remorse? He never sustained the relations which we sustain. He was neither husband nor father. He was mechanic; but he never was civil ruler nor candidate for position. Surely, the temptations which most severely gird men must have been unknown to him in such deprivation. Did he know all the anxieties which spring from the various relations of life without having sustained those relations?

But mark! All trials, springing from whatever cause, come back in our experience to some original faculty, and record themselves there; and if every faculty and attribute of Christ was proved to the uttermost, so that it may be truly said that no combination of circumstances can ever wring the conscience, or put to proof the reason, pride, love of praise, benevolence, or mercy, as these qualities have been proved in the Savior, does it need that he should have sustained all the different relationships which men sustain? Might he not have had every part of his nature put thoroughly to proof, and to a proof transcending any experience of ours, without having been obliged to go into the same places and circumstances which are known to our experience?

Men may lose money, one by having it burned, another by having it sunk in the ocean, and a third by having it stolen; but the loss of money is the same in every case, and the pang of loss is one, though the occasion and method of loss may be three.

An arm is made strong in one case by the anvil, in another case by the plow, in another instance by the oar, and in another by the gymnasium. And so when a feeling is made perfect, the training by which it is made so—that which tries it and puts it to proof—may be one thing, or another, or another. But if it be brought to its maximum proof, it makes no difference what the circumstance or occasion or cause is.

The point is this: that every single attribute which is tried in us was tried in Jesus Christ—the difference being, that when we are tried we are overmatched, and when he was tried he was "without sin."

But from this initial view rose up a larger one; namely, the divine nature of Christ, and the relations which that will have to his sympathetic knowledge of suffering; for I now, as I intimated that I should, remark, that the quality and extent of suffering depends not half so much on the exciting causes of it, as upon the nature of the faculty

which suffers. It is the power of suffering that is inherent in any faculty, that measures suffering, and not the magnitude of the aggression which is made outwardly. For there are many who will stand up and have their name battered as if they were but a target almost without suffering, the nature and quality of the love of praise in them being such that it is not wounded nor hurt; while there are others to whom the slightest disparagement is like a poisoned arrow, and rankles with exquisite suffering. There be men who all their life-long walk under an arch that rains down abuse, and care nothing for it; and there are others who, if touched, as it were, but by the point of a needle, are inoculated with incurable agony. It is the quality of a faculty that determines how much one suffers by it.

A stroke of a pound weight upon a bell two inches in diameter, will give forth a certain amount of sound. Let the bell be of one hundred pounds weight, and the same stroke of one pound will more than quadruple the amount of aerial vibration. Let the bell be increased to a thousand pounds, and the same stroke will make the reverberations vaster, and cause them to roll yet further. Let it be a five or ten thousand pound weight bell, and that same stroke that made a tinkling on the small bell, makes a roar on this large one.

The very same quality that being struck in a small being produces a certain amount of susceptibility, being struck in a Being that is infinite, produces an infinitely greater experience; for feeling increases in the ratio of being. Where we begin lowest, in the animal kingdom, there is the least susceptibility; for feeling, or sensibility, goes with nerve; and nerve apparently comes in far from the beginning. But as it augments, and goes up in quality, the element of sensibility increases.

Doubtless the analogy goes on and up. Therefore the greater the being, the greater the effect of a given touch of trouble. The same suffering in a great nature is a thousand fold greater than it is in a small nature, because there is the vibration, as it were, of a mind so much greater, given to the suffering. We find, among our selves, the same cause to produce varying results, according to the natures of different persons. There are some in whom an unkind word from one loved produces a greater amount of suffering than in others the death of a near friend would produce. There is a certain sort of conventional necessity for being overwhelmed at the death of a friend; but if we were to take statistics of hearts, I think we should find that there is every degree of suffering caused by bereavements which afflict men, according to the sensibility of those that suffer. There are thousands of men who are not much troubled because those whom they loved (as much as they could love anything) were taken from them.

The death of a friend creates sadness in some. The sadness becomes painful for an hour or two, in others. The pain increases in still others. It is anguish in others. It is overwhelming in still others. The intensity of the suffering is according to the magnitude of the suffering part. The same event, as we see it reflected in its influence upon human life, produces results along the scale of a faculty, according to the magnitude and sensibility of that faculty.

Now, transfer these thoughts and illustrations to the divine nature. There is no experience among us that goes far, compared to the distance and route it travels, when judged by the divine and the infinite. The chord in our souls is short and stubborn. The chord in the divine soul is infinite; and its vibrations are immeasurably beyond any experience of our own. Sorrow in us is of the same kind as sorrow in God; and yet, as compared with the sorrow of God, human sorrow is but a mere puff. Love in us moves in no such circles as it does in God. In him it is never dimmed by any such glooms of fear, nor sullied by any such smoke of passions, as it is in us. It is not in Jesus, as in us, a mere household taper, burning when sheltered, and at that throwing its light less and less strongly the more the space is augmented. God is a sun, and his love goes out like sunlight, infinite, inexhaustible, not measured like a vintner's cup, to a precise quantity, but, without measure, ever-flowing as the waters; unfathomable as the ocean; all-persuasive as the light and the heat. But if the offspring effects of love are universal and infinite, what must be the nature of that attribute which is capable of such results?

In the same way we might reason in respect to divine justice—its scope, its susceptibility, its power of receiving impressions, as well as of producing impressions; of the divine mercy; and of the divine indignation.

We see, then, how wonderful was the trial through which Christ passed. If it was a trial that is to be measured, not by the excitant, not by the occasion, but by the susceptibility of an infinitely sensitive divine nature, we cannot measure what the temptations of Christ were by simply looking upon the persons that tempted him. It was not that Satan tempted him: it was that God was tempted. It was not that one of his beloved disciples betrayed him: it was that the divine Heart was betrayed. Hunger in us; the not having where to lay one's head; the lonesomeness which men feel when they are consciously cut off from the sympathy of their fellows—these are no measures of the sufferings which Christ experienced from the same causes. The yearnings of an infinite heart, such as God's, cannot be measured by the slight and easily-cured yearnings of men. Our God is not greater than we by the things in which he differs from us, so much as by his sim-

ilarities to us. He is like us; but that likeness goes on augmenting. Love in God, for instance, is what love is in us; but that love which is in us a throb, in him augments to a volume inconceivable in our personality. Human nature, carried in one way, runs toward the animal and the earthy. Carried in the other way, it runs toward spirit—toward God. The divine Being is not some mysterious and glorious other Being, but an infinite and inconceivably perfect manhood of the same sort as ours. When we see him, we shall see him as he is, and shall see ourselves more clearly in him than we ever saw ourselves in ourselves.

All our traits have their original in God. He was tempted, and he suffered, under temptation, the same line of thought and feeling that we do—only without sin. But he was made a perfect Captain of our salvation. He was made to be, by the things which he suffered, just the One to go before us in imagination, in all trial and thrall, in all sorrows, in all burdens and cares, in all anxieties, yearnings and aspirations; because he knows what we suffer, having been tempted just as we are, the only difference being that he suffered more, and yet without sin.

Upon this basis I will make one or two points of application.

1. There can be no possible experience in the human soul which will not be perfectly interpreted to God out of his own heart. We are obliged to draw often upon our imagination; and at that we can scarcely enter into the sufferings of men. An avaricious man cannot possibly understand the sacrifice of an over-benevolent and conscientious man. An avaricious man reproaches himself as he lays his head upon his pillow, that he was betrayed into the weakness of giving away to a beggar on that day, some funds. Right over against him is a benevolent man who hardly quiets himself to sleep because he missed an opportunity of bestowing a charity, where, with a little more alacrity and a little more care, he might have had a chance of conferring happiness. These two men cannot understand each other; or, if they do, they must do it by imagination. The best men in this world are oftentimes the poorest men to govern you. That is, they are men who are removed from the sphere of your sympathy, in that they scarcely can understand you. Such men are so built that the reason predominates, and the moral sentiments predominate, and he has little of the animal nature, being slender of neck and small of basilar organization. But is he never tempted? It may be that to selfishness and avarice he is, but never to violence, never to theft, and never to deceit. His instincts run in moral directions; and when he looks, from his organization, high above all ordinary temptations, down on bull-headed men, fierce with blood, strong, wrestling with mighty temptations of

life, he can neither understand them nor believe there is anything for such men but damnation. Woe be to the man that is coarsely organized, and that has no mercy except that which he can find at the hands of a very finely organized man, who never had one of his thrusts of trouble or trial! A man who is open and generous cannot measure the contempt which he feels for a mean, stingy man. And yet, that mean and stingy man is a *man*. He has his sorrows and sufferings. He has immortality in him struggling to get free. For him Christ died. Poor as he is in the sight of men; unwelcome as he is in the way of friendship; little as he is before men, after all he has a Savior. A great Heart there is that suffered for him, and that now throbs for him.

Why, there are clean diseases and there are nasty diseases; but a good and true physician or surgeon takes the most disagreeable of all diseases just as quickly as the most agreeable. Yea, if they are mighty in threats, he takes them all the more readily, because the skill that can cure such awful diseases magnifies the man that wields it. And I sometimes think that this is the meaning of Christ, when he says that heaven is gladder of one bad man called back, than of all good men. It is a very easy thing to manage good men—comparatively it is easy; though it is hard enough to manage even them. But as where a man is most awfully sick, and given up by all, a physician steps in, and stands by him, and will not go forth till the plague is stayed, and the fountain is cleansed, and health comes back; so Christ, when he sees men that are low-browed, and low-headed, and low-thoughted, stands by their side, and calls manhood out of the grave of their being, as he called Lazarus out of the grave of his death. Oh! the salvation of such a man—how it redounds to the glory of God. There is encouragement in working among degraded men in the example of Christ, who began at the bottom and worked toward the top, instead of beginning at the top and working toward the bottom. He was born low, and of the poorest parents. More than that, he was born under the stigma of being illegitimate. Nothing can be lower than that. And from that point in the stable, he worked upward. And he was most found, in his ministrations, by the side of the harlot and the publican—by the side of those that society scoffed at; and the only men that called forth thunder from the lips of Jesus, were those who stood high in power and culture and refinement, but used these qualities only to be inhuman with them, and did not care for those below them. They were the men of whom he said, “Woe! woe!” as if the thunders of the coming judgment had already begun to sound in their ears.

There is no possible experience, then, of the lowest nature, that is not easily, familiarly known in the presence of God in Christ Jesus.

Every man that has wallowed in bestiality; every man that has been subject to the temptations which belong to deceit and dishonesty; every man that has felt the fiery thrusts of the passions; every man that has experienced the envies and jealousies which come in the attritions of society; every man that has had great hopes turned to disappointment—every such man can go to Jesus, and say, “Lord, thou hast not sinned; but these feelings that are tried in me to the uttermost have been tried in thee;” and the response from heaven would be, “In that I have been tempted, I am able to succor those who are tempted.” There is succor for every man who is tempted, no matter how low he may be. There are men who stand in the shadow of perdition; there are men who say they are tempted of the devil; there are men who, from the very beginning, count themselves unworthy of hope; and yet no temptation befalls a man that is so low, or so gross, or so brutal, that he cannot carry it into the presence of Christ, and say, “Oh, thou Tempted in All Points as I Am, help me;” for that is his name—*Tempted in All Points as I Am.*

Nothing is so exquisite in you, nothing is so multitudinous in you, nothing is so venomous and painful in you, in the way of moral temptations, that it has not had some part in the experience of Christ, so that it is interpreted to him perfectly. And every sigh, every groan, every aspiration, every thought, that will not even look up, but that, looking down, despairs—God knows them all, and knows them quick; for they bound, as it were, against his heart, bringing up suggestions of trials in his own self.

2. God looks upon all the trials of men, whether of sin, or of ordinary providence, as a parent looks upon a child's trials; as a physician looks upon a patient's symptoms; as a teacher looks upon a pupil's low inexperience.

We have been taught that God hates sin, and abhors sinners. We have been so taught that we could not avoid the inference that God was inaccessible to his creatures; that our God sat upon the summit of a cliff full five thousand feet sheer above us. To be sure, on one side there has been cut in the rock a straight and narrow way; but at the bottom are men that are without feet, men that are without hands, and men that are swollen with dropsies; and how shall they climb up that way? The inference of the teaching that we have had has too often been, “There is a God of mercy up there: if you will only go up this narrow shining way, and reach him, he will accept you.” Ah! the tide is out, and at the base of the cliff there are hundreds who cannot go up; and if there is not a God to go down to them, there is no God for them. It is for the poor, it is for the weak, it is for the helpless, that we need a Savior. The strong can take care of themselves, relatively

speaking; but what shall become of those who are weak through stress of sin? What shall become of the poor and needy?

Brethren, we have a God that *seeks* men. You do not find him, but he finds you. As a lamb is caught in the thorns and thickets, so men are caught in snares. And as one mired cannot go after relief, but must have relief come to him, so God searches for men that are snared. He goes out to find them. He is a Father. He is more than a Father—a God—for fatherhood is only one bright conception that sprang from the soul of God.

There is, therefore, no possible experience which one needs to cover up between himself and God. Shame tends to hide. We too often draw near to God with the more honorable class of our transgressions. Ah! it were better to be honest with ourselves, to be honest with our God, and to speak freely and plainly. For *naked and open are we before him with whom we have to do*, blessed be God! Therefore there is not one single wicked thing in you which has sprung up since you began to live a Christian life, that has surprised God in the least.

Persons sometimes think, "Ah! if that friend knew this he would not love me. I would not have it come to the ears of my patron, or defender, or friend, for anything. He would be disappointed. He took me to be high and noble; but if he found this out he would cast me off."

Now, there is nothing for God to find out about us. He knows all about you. When he took you, he took you knowing the uttermost. And you never will disappoint him, by being worse than he thought you would be. You never will sin where he did not expect you to sin. Your guilt never will be greater than he made up his mind to bear with and pardon when he took you. He took you as a mother takes her child. She thanks God for it, though she knows it will be vain and proud and selfish, and that it will have all the evils of temper that belong to the race from which it comes. It is hers, and in spite of its faults she loves it with unspeakable love. And God clasps every soul that he once takes, and takes it for good or for bad. The wedding between the soul and God is one that knows no divorce, either here or hereafter.

"Let us, then, come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." So says the apostle; and the basis of the exhortation is this: God knows it all. He has felt all that you feel. He has had the same trial of faculty that you have had. He sympathizes with you. He loves you. It is his delight to bring sons and daughters home to glory. He was himself made perfect that he might do that very work to which he invites you.

3. We see that there is a light thrown upon suffering of every kind

connected with Christ, as illustrating his feeling in the divine economy, and its moral government. We see that suffering is not that fuliginous, sulphurous thing which we have too often been accustomed to regard it. It is sometimes an infirmity, sometimes a misfortune, and sometimes a sin; but whichever it is, there is in it argument of patience. Christ suffered too. Arm yourselves, therefore. Hear him saying, "Ye in this world shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." Hear him saying, "Because I live, ye shall live also." Hear him saying, in our text, "For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." Is it sickness of body? Is it disappointment of outward support? Is it the overthrow of all your worldly expectations? Is it the bitter thrust of the child's disobedience? Is it bankruptcy of heart at the loss of one much beloved? Is it trouble occasioned by your own pride? Is it the irritableness of your passion? Is it some surprising sin that leaped out like a lion from ambush, and took you down? Is it backsliding along the soiled and slimy way of the passions? Is it any duty so great that you dare not assail it? What is the trouble or trial that you have? Is it greater than those troubles and trials that overshadowed Jesus? Is it possible for the fibre of your little soul, however much it may be tried, to suffer in any direction as Jesus Christ's great sounding soul suffered in that same direction? He has declared, Because I have been a sufferer, right where you are, and was triumphant, I have power to give triumph to you.

Come boldly, then, to this suffering Savior. Make his sufferings argument of your consolation; and rejoice in this, that you are strong, because great is he that hath undertaken for you.

Great is Jesus, because he is God. Great is God, because he loves. Great is love, because it shall cleanse and redeem, and yet shall be sovereign, because *every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess to the glory of God.*

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We draw near to thee, O thou ascended Savior! and take hold upon thee with all our souls; for thou art to us very God. Whom have we in heaven but thee? All the thoughts which we frame into the Father's image are thoughts which we have borrowed of thee. All that which enkindles joy and hope in us, we have borrowed of thee. We come unto the Father by the thoughts which we have borrowed from thy life; by that character which thou hast framed before us; by all the sympathies which we have learned to love and call divine. All that we worship in the Father is but that which we see in thee. We rejoice that there is this unity. Though we cannot frame a knowledge of the Infinite; though we cannot understand the division of thy nature and being, when we draw near to thee in love, there is but the one, whether it be the Father, the Son, or the Holy Ghost. To us all is Father, all is Savior, and all is Holy Ghost. And we rejoice that there is no perplexity when our hearts are filled with love and joy. We rejoice that when we rise into the air of our nobler feelings, and by faith commune with the invisible, all is harmonious. Only when we fall back into the fear and degradation and shadow of our passions, do we find doubt and uncertainty, and questions of difficulty multiplying on every hand. Grant that we may have that spiritual purity in which all doubts are resolved. Grant that we may fulfill the truth of thy declaration, "The pure in heart shall see God."

We pray, O Lord our God, that this day thou wilt shine upon us from out of thine heavenly height. Nay, stand among us, that it may be as Brother with brethren, and Friend with friends. For thou hast crossed the threshold of earthly homes. Thou hast made thyself dear among children, and among their parents. Thou knowest the world, and all its needs, whether they be of weakness or of strength; whether they be of wrong or of right. Thou knowest perfectly how to fit thyself to all the exigencies of life. We pray, therefore, that thou wilt draw near to us. Give us not alone the conception of thy divinity, overarching and filling with glory all the infinite space; but grant that we may see thee a God near at hand. Be Immanuel to us, to-day—God *in* us, and *with* us, as well as for us and about us; for we very much need thee. We need thee in all the way of life. What things are there that we can do without thee, but things which are of the dust, and which go again to the dust? What pleasures are there that are not of thee but those which perish in the using?

Oh! grant that we may have to-day yearnings after such honor as man cannot give; after such treasure as cannot be found in this world; after such manhood as is not demanded among men. May we yearn to be the sons of God; to be the companions of Jesus Christ, both in his tribulation, and in the consolations of his sufferings. Grant that we may esteem ourselves better than the beasts which perish. Oh! give us that appetite, that celestial hunger, which the sons of God have. Satisfy the desire which thou dost excite. Lord, we beseech of thee that thou wilt grant that in all our troubles, whether they be the burdens of life, whether they be the incertitudes which come from limited thought or limited power of judgment, or whether they be the sharp temptations which come upon us, as arrows sent by the evil archer which strike and wound us sorely, we may have thy presence; that we may have thee for a refuge; that we may have thee to rest our thoughts upon in the hour of weariness. For, as children away from home comfort themselves in the thought of father and mother, so we, while exiled from heaven, long to have the thought of thee so near and so dear to us that we can run home in imagination, and be no more exiled, but ever present with the Lord.

Grant, we beseech of thee, to all in thy presence, according to their several circumstances, that grace which they especially need. Grant confirmation to those that are as a reed shaken in the wind. Grant steadfastness to those that hitherto have been roving and drifting hither and thither. Grant that all those who are perplexed with doubt, and with trouble of mind thereby, may have that certainty which the witness of thy Spirit gives to them. Grant that those who have been bereaved, and are mourning under the strokes of thy hand, may be comforted by thy presence, and may see the wonders which thou art working under the veil of darkness and affliction.

Lord, we pray that we may not desire forever to be clusters because they are fair to the sight. May we be willing that the hand of the Lord should pluck us and crush us, that we may be as wine in his cup.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant to those who are restored from sickness, and are brought to the house of God, and around whose grateful minds this day swarm thoughts of gratitude and impulses of thanksgiving, access to thee. May they be able to pour out their souls before God, knowing that it is not little to him, though it be small in them. May they know that God gives value to the smallest gifts of true hearts, and makes them in his taking more than they were in their giving.

Grant, we beseech of thee, that thy presence may be with those who are yearning and longing for others; those whose hearts are burdened not for themselves; those who are suffering for others—for their clearance, for their ennobling, and for their confirmation in all hope and in all good. Walk with them; talk with them; fold them in thine arms, and in thine own bosom, that they may go forth as from the sanctuary, ready and strong again to bear their burdens.

Grant, we beseech of thee, thy blessing to rest upon all those who suffer from the stings of poverty, and misfortune, from persecution, from the annoyances and cares of the world, and all its venomous dust. We beseech of thee that they may be able to cast their cares and their burdens upon the Lord. There may they rest where there is everlasting strength; and may they be able, from day to day, to renew this blessed consecration, and take this strength, which is for them, and for all that need it. Though they cannot bear themselves up, may they have the wings of the Almighty to lift them; and so may they be carried even as the eagle carries its young.

Grant, we beseech of thee, O Lord, thy blessing to rest upon all the members of the different families that are represented in this Church. Bless the households. Bless the dear little children. Bless those that would fain stamp virtue and piety upon them in the early periods of their lives. Bless our Sabbath schools and our Bible classes. May both those that teach and those that are taught be taught in the higher class of God. And may the seeds of everlasting life be early sown, and bring forth fruit a hundred fold.

Bless, we beseech of thee, all that are strangers in our midst. Sanctify to them the errands and purposes of their lives. Follow their thoughts wherever they go. And may their very thoughts be a channel through which blessings shall be carried to those who are dear to them as their own lives.

Bless, we beseech of thee, all thy Churches, to-day, and all thy ministering servants. Bless thy cause, under every form. Bless schools and colleges and seminaries of learning. Bless the various channels of intelligence—papers and magazines that are sent forth as leaves for the healing of this nation. Grant that all influences may be for the furtherance of truth and piety and true spirituality. Let thy kingdom come to the suppression of war. Let superstition flee. Let all revolutions and shakings of the earth be for the advancement of thy final glory. Let thy kingdom come, and thy will be done upon earth as it is in heaven. And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit. *Amen.*

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